Andy Walker

Humbug, it's December again, and Xmas is just around the corner and it's bleak news everywhere on the free radio scene. The raid on the "Communicator" may have finished off the project and the "Nannell" has been sold and is no longer a broadcast station. Even Caroline is doomed, if not by another raid on the ship then it is believed the new radio bill will carry legislation to allow the authorities to board any ship with transmitting equipment on board, even if it's registered. This means the end of any broadcasts from International Waters in Europe. Caroline could close down and call it a day, or wait for the government to silence her for good - we shall have to wait and see what happens. The new bill could also see the end of many of the pirate stations in cities all over the UK. The hobby stations would be the only free radio stations on the airwaves and this would be only of a weekend - once again we shall have to wait and see. One thing that remains positive is that free radio on SW will continue as we know it with very little hassle from the authorities. One thing that remains clear is that all pirates everywhere must stand up and say that we disagree with what government proposes with the new stations that are already on or coming on air, if you've heard these stations you'll know what I mean. Is this the type of radio we want?? Ponsed up, plastic sounding like ILR, it's not what we looked for and hoped for in a new independent radio system. The ordinary listener does not know better, because he or see hasn't heard better, not when a radio body who thinks it knows what people want, tells people what they should listen to and that's what's wrong with this country - fat cats and bureaucracy - and these people want to stop Caroline and other offshore ventures, because the operators of these stations have minds of their own, and we can't have that can we!! Merry Christmas.

And from ACTIVITY we say thanks for reading the magazine in 1989 and have a nice Christmas, see you next year!!

DEC '89

Monthly Shortwave Free Radio News from
3 Greenway, Harold Park, Romford,
Essex, RM3 OHH, England.

ACTIVITY MAGAZINE

Dec '89

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« Rewind 89

As the year turned, the most notable event were the new radio laws in Southern Ireland, the shortwave stations were now stepping into new territory, certainly it was clear that we'd no longer hear Prince Terry each week any more - and we didn't. But later it was realised that for the Irish, things were not going to be too bad - only the threats of the new laws would hang over operator's heads. At the time of writing, it seems we may have seen the last of Radio Apollo Int'l, the long running station, who at one point were quite a regular voice. New Year's Day saw them appear in their last guise - as the spoof station "Voice of the Leek". So Apollo look to be gone - but one can never be quite certain in free radio. Atlanta Radio had run up 10 years of activity come January and to celebrate, they broadcast a 10th anniversary special and produced a tape to match (Jan 22). Britain Radio Int'l started 1989 looking for a new frequency and were to be "off" four months, only able to make an irregular set of programmes for the first quarter of the year. The 6305 channel previously used had become unusable as far as BRI were concerned. Early '89 also produced worrying rumours that the DTI were about to "take out" UK stations, this never happened but over in West Germany, Radio Batida's high activity prompted a visit by the German DBP (Jan 22). IRRS Italy started in February with a 10 KW tx but despite being "free radio" ended up relaying mostly non-free radio stations.

Springtime arrived and there were also some new beginnings on the shortwave front, Rainbow Radio Germany will be remembered as the first "milepost" in 1989 for the year's trend in night time activity, being heard in the early hours of Easter Monday. Radio Confusion Int'l starts broadcasting on Easter Sunday and Radio Freedom Int'l resumes broadcasting after a lengthy absence in early April. March also gave us the return of the crusading John England, the British-born American not afraid to air his views and Radio Orion were quite happy to put them out Sunday lunchtimes. It has been suggested that SW must be fairly safe if Orion could get away with relaying such strong programme material, not to mention the "Big O" were, and still are, broadcasting week-in, week-out. That was several months ago though, JE's programme ceased in a short time. Also in April: BRI returns to scheduled broadcasts on new 6230 and April Fool's Day didn't go un-noticed by some operators with a sense of humour, would you believe Wee Guy Radio could be on 50 KHz or that Belgium's Radio Delmare had returned, some people were trying to convince us of just that!! The second "milepost" in the night time trend came in late-May when Radio Confusion Int'l and Total Control Radio combined for three hours of night time broadcasting (May 27). Already on the "road" were Jolly Roger Radio who'd started regular night transmissions.

It may have not caused as much notice compared to what was going to happen out on the North Sea a few months later, but mid-June newcomers to SW Radio Laser Int'l were raided by the DTI. It seems that once again on these rare raids, there were "special circumstances". Prince Terry had got back on the air in April under the call-sign of Underground Sounds but in June Westside were back for a one-off and in July Ozone Radio became the name, reflecting the operator's concern about "green" issues.

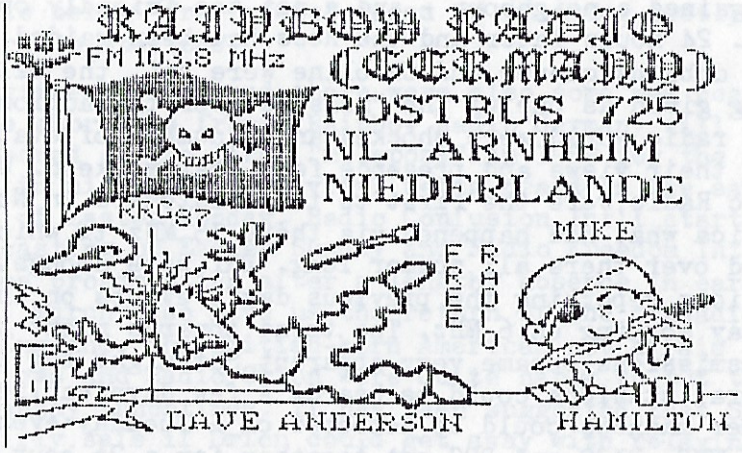
Perhaps out of all the months this year, August 1989 will be mostly remembered. It was a Friday evening here when WFRL's Andy Walker called to tell us that the Ross Revenge had gained a neighbour - and a not too friendly one as well. 24 hours later and the Ross had been raided in a very dubious manner and Caroline were off, the 6215 SW tx being given as one of the "reasons" for the action. The free radio world were shocked and a number of stations made their views and presence felt that weekend. Weekend Music Radio were the first to tell listeners in North America what had happened via their 15 MHz tx which had heard over there all summer long. BRI were amongst the stations reporting the previous day's events on the Sunday morning on 6 MHz. The trend towards night time transmissions became very apparent Sat night Aug 12 when several stations could be heard. A few days earlier, summer madness could be detected on a Tuesday evening when WMR, DX20 and RRG got together for a 2½ hour QSO!!

Late in the month, KBC-Radio returned (Aug 27) as did UK-GM (Aug 28). KBC's Tom de Witt (back on his station after doing the DX show for World Mission Radio) found a good response for his return from listeners.

Late September now, and the weekend 23-24 conditions were "wide open", the Voice of Tomorrow became the first American station to cross the Atlantic in several years. It was not too long before a few more followed (revealed later this issue). The conditions of that weekend became most apparent at 0300 as clandestine Radio Venceramos found their way across as well. The process was working the other way too, not just with WMR on 15 MHz but with Radio Stella and Radio Dublin on 6 MHz, even Rainbow Radio were a tentative log!! Ill-fated Radio Laser returned early October as did Radio Caroline. Atlanta Radio said they'd be certain to say goodbye in 1990 and 70-odd letters arrive in Hunstanton showing their support. Radio Pythagoras comes back after many a year off (Nov 5).

And that was the free radio scene on shortwave in 1989, long may it continue into the future !!

Next issue: The most active GB Sunday stations in 1989. Full list and details. Don't miss it!!



STATION NEWS

ALL TIMES ARE UTC

GB After an absence of several years, RADIO PYTHAGORAS WORLDWIDE SW returned to the air Sun 5 Nov on 6282 and later 6200. This station used to broadcast many years ago back in the late 70's. The "new" Pythagoras featured rock music and a fair signal. An address of 57 Home Lacy Road, London SE12 OHP, England was given out for letters although we're not sure if this is 100% correct since we may have spelt the road name wrong.

The operator of RADIO LASER INT'L has been in court recently regarding the raid back in mid-June, a fine of £500 with £450 costs was dished out. However, note that this wasn't a first offence. Apparently on future broadcasts, the station intends to carry a "DTI Watch", following their antics as they chase stations up and down this country. It's also thought Laser has been using as little as 3 watts for recent broadcasts although signals have been fair. The station were active for the first couple of Suns in November and are heard on 6209 or 6235.

RADIO ORION seem to now be operating Suns 1000-1400 on 6299 with DJ's Rod Lucas, Paul Johnson and Paul Fraser, this past Sunday Mike Wilson returned again with a taped show it seems. A large amount of 70's rock is currently being heard on the "Big O" these days and 'phone lines have been open recently with someone from the station standing by a 'phone box waiting for listener's calls!! Saturday broadcasts are few at the moment, although on Sat 25 Nov the tx was switched on to air "GRQ Hard Rockin".

Still "early birds" but seemingly going past 0900 at the moment are FALCON RADIO, broadcasting each Sunday on 6870 with a selection of rock music, such as Guns n' Roses, Rolling Stones, Stevie Winwood, Queen and the Pretenders, all of whom have been played on the station over the past few weeks. Reception is quite variable but at least the channel is fairly clear.

Testing on Sun 26 Nov were RADIO GLORIA INT'L from Scotland on 6293 but a weak signal was noted for the test.

It's been quite a while since we've heard from DELTA RADIO, but November found them back on the air after a break of several months. A test went out on Sat 11 Nov on 6232 in preparation for resuming last Saturday broadcasts. No ID's were actually heard on the test, just music, but Norman Nelson revealed it was them on a recent RECC broadcast. The signal-strength was strong.

BRITAIN RADIO INT'L has been inactive throughout November and we understand this is because Roger Davis has some troubles. Presumably BRI will be back sometime in the next month, it's traditional for them to be on Boxing Day.

London based FM rockers, RFM continue to be noted each Sunday on 6316 with strong signals and a relay for their FM service here in London. A frequency change is expected soon. Many of the DJ's are veterans of the London FM scene over the past 10 years or so.

Battling against the odds on Sun 26 Nov were FREESOUND RADIO who started up their broadcast on 6266 and were "taken out" by the utility that is usually present on that frequency. A welcome change to 6233 was made later and we heard soft rock take the station to close at 1440.

STAR
INTERNATIONAL
49 METREBAND
SHORTWAVE
Live Long And Prosper

No sign yet for the planned return of FREE MEDWAY TOWN RADIO who expect to be back soon with their own tx. No news either here from the people behind it. In other words, please send some!! Look for tests anyway.

RADIO CONFUSION INT'L were inactive during November while op Steve Midnight is laying plans for the station's future. Xmas week RCI expect to be quite active with both day and night broadcasts. In fact there's a good chance of quite a few night time appearances Xmas week but these will probably mostly start sometime after 0000 to avoid the noise at night on the bands during the winter months. Besides, the station might be active before Christmas as well. The plans for 7 MHz transmissions have been put on hold until the New Year.

RADIO EAST COAST COMMERCIAL

RECC will be on-air "live" on 6815 and 11511 on Christmas Day and will have an on-air 'phone line available for listener contact on....

04853 - 2742

Continental listeners will need to dial the UK country code followed by....

4853 - 2742

Please note the 'phone line will only be for Christmas Day.

RADIO PAMELA INT'L made it's return broadcast Sun 19 Nov over 7440 via Radio Waves Int'l. The station is now being run by Richard Grahamme.

The operators of RADIO 48 had a surprise when they arrived at the tx site for the recent broadcast, they were confronted with council workmen and so had to find another place for the tx nearby!! The antenna was then strung up between the trees and off they went. Programmes on Sun 19 Nov on 6280 were made up of Mark Stafford inc his "World of Radio" feature and then Ian Scott came on with his "Mailbox" show. More letters have come through for the October transmission taking the total to almost 20 which isn't at all bad. The 7 MHz night time project is currently on hold. Note that a new address is now in use for the station, contact is now via Hunstanton.

RADIO EAST COAST COMMERCIAL are transmitting on both 6815 and 11512 currently, with the usual programmes from Norman Nelson. RECC New York correspondent Dave is going to be back soon with an interview with Al Wiener of the Radio New York Int'l offshore project. The "DX Programme" is still aired on the 1st Sunday of the month.

On Sat 4 Nov from 2300-0000, TOTAL CONTROL RADIO were back on the airwaves after a near three month break, the frequency was 6275 and the transmission got into West Germany fairly well, It's possible TCR will be active Sat 16 Dec at night and they also expect to be about at Xmas. A 30 watt tx into a 10 foot high outdoor antenna is used.

Early morning Sun 5 Nov and also later, RADIO GEMINI made it's 17th anniversary broadcasts, the station is short-wave's longest with only Radio Titanic anywhere near.

Site problems caused WONDERFUL FREE RADIO LONDON to miss their 1st Sunday broadcast in November, but they were heard the following Sunday on 6275 but "Tender Trip" was missing. Sat 11 Nov WFRL were active 1000-1300 with Dave the Rave, Andy Walker, Terry Philips (new voice-first show) and Adrian Cooke. Further Saturday morning broadcasts are planned for December. At Christmas there's a chance of broadcasts on 15725 or 17500, in fact this coming Sunday 3 Dec at 0100, WFRL expect to be on 17500. A 'phone line has been in use recently, callers should note that they are welcome to leave a message on the answer-phone for airing on the station. Apart from the people who've just called the hear the message on the 'phone line without leaving any message, Andy Walker is quite pleased with overall response recently and rates it as "quite good".

RADIO FREEDOM INT'L were heard in the early evening around 1730 on Sun 5 Nov and also with a test on Sun 12 Nov during the usual Sunday morning period, both times 6205 has been used.

No doubt WEEKEND MUSIC RADIO will be active as usual over Christmas as they were last year with their famous 'phone in shows on 6 MHz. Also there's HF channels that could be used so distant listeners take note of the following: 13630 - 15045 - 15065 - 15640 - 15680 - 21810 - 21846 - 25965. Any of these could be used.

Con In the early hours of Christmas Eve, three Dutch stations are planning to take to the air as part of North American tests. The stations are the VOICE OF THE NETHERLANDS, RADIO EAST COAST HOLLAND and FRS HOLLAND. All should be using well above 100 watts, the tests will go out at 0400 on 41m (7300-7500).

FRS HOLLAND returned to the airwaves a week later than expected on Sun 26 Nov. Announcements were made regarding the annual marathon broadcast for Xmas, which this year will be taking place on Christmas Eve and should last for five hours. A one hour test was made Sun 12 Nov between 1100-1200 (UTC??) with a new 150 watt tx, apparently coming from Belgian ground. Good signals are noted from the tx which is using 7310.

Dutch medium wavers RADIO LONDON were heard on shortwave on the night of Sat 11 Nov on 6315 via VOTN, this was in parallel with the MW-tx and both were operating at high power. The signal-strength on SW was strong and offshore Radio London jingles were used, together with announcements for the "Power Station". A tape of Radio Moonflower (unofficial) could be heard later.

RADIO ACTION made one of it's rare appearances Sat 18 Nov on 6207, heard 0853-1030 before our listener's attention was broken. A varied selection of music was noted.

Some bad news from Holland now, KBC-RADIO are having problems with the law, in fact the last post was lost - so it's not a good idea to write to the station at the moment until you hear otherwise.

Apparently, French station RADIO DEEJAY has closed down, no reasons are known. The station used to transmit on 6265 and also via Radio Waves Int'l.

The PIRATE FREAKS BROADCASTING SERVICE has been heard a few times during the month, early Sun 5 Nov they were heard 0243-0328 on 6292 with good reception but some utility underneath. Sun 19 Nov at 1122 on 6239 with 1-2 strength and later at 1411 on 7490 with poor reception. PFBS announced in their transmission on Sun 22 Oct (coming from a "field location" apparently) that listeners should write to them at PO Box 19074, NL-3501 DB Utrecht, the Netherlands, that they actually heard the station. If there's not enough reaction, the shortwave programmes could be suspended.

RAINBOW RADIO GERMANY announced in their broadcast Sun 5 Nov that you can only expect one more transmission from the station on shortwave and after that they will be closing down. Their newsletter "Free Radio Desaster" will also be suspended with the"final issue". According to further announcements in the programme, the German postal authorities have closed down their maildrop in Stolberg so now RRG can only be contacted via PO Box 65027, NL-3002 DA Rotterdam, the Netherlands. RRG are said to be planning to concentrate on FM when the SW goes off and "when" seems to be the right word since they've made at least three broadcasts since saying they were going off!!

STARFLEET RADIO expect to concentrate on FM broadcasts in the future - so don't expect much from them on shortwave.

Steve Young of the CLANDESTINE LISTENERS CLUB GERMANY tells us that the station received 11 letters for their recent broadcast in October. An appearance from CLCG in December is uncertain and depends on the relay operator.

Infamous distorted modulation and VFO's greeted anyone who tuned to 7492 on Sun 26 Nov, of course this was RADIO BRIGITTE making one of their rare appearances.

RADIO LUCE INT'L seem to be the operators of the 6520 tx, heard regularly in recent times. The tx relayed RADIO SCORPIO on Sun 5 Nov playing modern rock music.

RADIO WAVES INT'L continue to be heard over 7440 with fair-good reception. Most of November the station has been airing it's celebration of it's 6th anniversary, often jointly with the World Communication Service.

Night time Sat 4 Nov and 6240 was being used throughout the evening for several stations, presumably via RRG, up first were RADIO KARIBU INT'L around 2100, then RADIO CALDONIA INT'L heard 2200-2300 ("return broadcast") inc an offshore news round up at 2250. At 0010, RAINBOW RADIO GERMANY were heard. Signal-strength was good but a nearby utility station called the narrow filter into action.

RADIO NORMAAL were noted on 6525 Sun 12 Nov with fair-good reception, but they were a little too close to the tx just down on 6520 causing some problems.

Appearing as promised Sun 5 Nov were RADIO WAHNSINN via 7490, a varied selection of music could be heard before the station signed-off at 0930.

The ITALIAN RADIO RELAY SERVICE are reported as each Sun 0800-1230 on 9860 and then tests on 13790. Dario Monferini of "Play-DX" is presenting a DX show inc English at 1255 one Sunday a month.

RADIO UNIVERSUM were active Sun 12 Nov on 7430.

Heard Sun 12 Nov also were RADIO CALIFORNIA INT'L on 6310 with mentions for the GFRC, fair signals were noted.

RADIO MARABU INT'L were heard briefly at 1416 on Sun 12 Nov on 7490 with good strength but went off suddenly several minutes later. Perhaps a test by the relayer??

Ire RADIO DUBLIN has at last returned to SW 6911 but as we all know, the channel's awful. JOLLY ROGER RADIO is presently heard Sat nights and Sun mornings on 6229. Prince Terry's OZONE INTERNATIONAL is heard sometimes on 6820. The SCOTTISH FREE RADIO SERVICE continues to be on 6320, some WABC was heard at the start of the month but RADIO STELLA INT'L are the main station heard.

NA More American stations are crossing the Atlantic: WMR's Jack Russell reports hearing recently VOICE OF LARYNGITIS at 0200 on 15015 with comedy but weak. He also heard SAMURAI RADIO at 0015 on 15609 with music/ID's and reasonable signal. Chris in Kent heard a carrier on 15598 at 1052 Sun 15 Oct, thinks it could have been Samurai as they were apparently testing at that time. These logs are truly amazing!! So 15 MHz is worth a check, the VOICE OF BOB has used 26000 recently so check there too. Don't forget the early hours 7300-7500 as well!!